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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 005228

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2016  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [TH](#)  
SUBJECT: NO CLARITY ON ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

REF: BANGKOK 5204

Classified By: Political Counselor Susan M. Sutton, reason 1.4 (b) (d)

11. (C) Authorities have released no further useful information yet today about the bomb discovered August 24 by the Prime Minister's residence Government. Government and security officials have proclaimed that the bomb was an assassination attempt. The Defense Minister told the press it was an attempt to bring down the government. Thaksin was quoted saying that at least four military officers were involved in the assassination plot. Much of the broadcast and print media is expressing varying degrees of skepticism about whether this is a real assassination attempt or a set-up by the PM or his supporters. However, the evening and morning news were filled with pictures and exact descriptions of the bomb, along with video of the bomb team disarming it and endless coverage of the arrest. All of this is likely to ratchet up already high tension levels. Informal checks with military contacts show that they are highly skeptical about the specific charges against the driver arrested yesterday, who appears to have no reason at all to be involved in a plot of this kind; they don't appear to buy the whole assassination scenario either. Police have been unusually reluctant to respond to any inquiries from us for further information about the investigation. Academics and others have warned the government against using the incident as a pretext to declare a state of emergency; Thaksin reportedly said that there was no need for such a step.

12. (C) COMMENT: It is likely to take some time for the full story to emerge, further complicating the efforts to get to a solution to the political crisis. Worsening relations between the PM and the military as a result of the accusations of their complicity are of particular concern. The widespread skepticism about the veracity of the government's claims provides more evidence, if we needed it, of the complete breakdown of trust between the Bangkok educated class and the PM.  
BOYCE